

STICKING TO THE FARM.

"I draw the papers, lawyer: I've changed my mind, you see, and I have had a talk and both of us agree."

"But, though the times are pretty hard and troubles round us swarm, and life ain't what it used to be, we will not soil the farm."

"I stood upon the knoll to-day and looked at the old place o'er. I thought it never looked so fresh and beautiful before: the clover had a redder hue, the creek a sweeter song, and over in the pasture stood the herd, a mottled throng."

"The vanished scenes of other days came back my soul to thrill, and I heard my ax's song upon the wooded hill: a sturdy boy I wielded it and whistled at my toil— a farmer's urchin, stout and brown, a product of the soil."

"The long nights of the winter, when before the roaring blaze sat and pored enraptured o'er Macaulay's stirring lays, and above the icy wind that swept across the ridge seemed to hear the shout of brave Horatius at the bridge!"

"Oh, on the farm which now I cross with steps a little slow grew to stalwart manhood in the cherished long ago: whistled there behind the plow and with the sickle keen cut the golden headed grain for forty years, I ween."

"Into the house where I was born one day I brought a bride, and Hannah Jane's beloved face has never left my side: beneath that roof we've lived and planned, and there the children wed, and twice in that old farmhouse dear a little one lay dead."

"We've talked the matter over, Hannah Jane and I to-day: I know I said I'd sell the farm to Banker Ezra Gray: But you needn't draw the papers up, for this old hand of mine my name upon the cruel deed will never sign."

"It might have been the clover, or the birds that filled the wood with just the sweetest songs, while upon the hill I stood: It may have been good Hannah's kiss, so loving and so kind, but then, it makes no difference, for I have changed my mind."

"Let Ezra keep his money, he can use it by and by. For when we two old people in the little churchyard lie, our boys who live where thousands in the mighty cities swarm, will ask for a division and they'll let him have the farm."

"But while we live it shall not pass beyond these hands of mine. So Ezra Gray can bide his time, the deed we will not sign: For sixty years upon the farm my good old wife and I have shared the griefs and joys of life, and there in peace we'll die."

"Yes, let us call the farm our own until the summons come and we have passed beyond the gates of the Eternal Home: we burn the papers, lawyer, and I'll go back and say to Hannah Jane, the farm is ours until we pass away."

—T. C. Harbaugh, in Ohio Farmer.

THE POISON OF LOVE.

BY GWENDOLEN OVERTON.

The commanding officer was seated in the adjutant's office, in troubled parley with the officer of the day.

It was high noon, midsummer, and Arizona; and though the adobe was as cool as only an adobe can be in fiery weather, the major was mopping his brow in entire discomfort.

"That's it! that's it!" he ejaculated. "Think of sending a man off on the very day of his wedding; the very day before he is to be married. It's a beastly unpleasant thing to have to do. But I'm too old for a trip like that; Gowan's on the sick list, Henderson's away, Thompson's wife may die any minute, Trowbridge won't be back from Grant until early to-morrow morning, and you're half dead (precious hospital we have!) and officer of the day besides. Then, moreover, Howland's about the only one who can handle those things right and not make a mess of it. He's got to go, that's all."

"I might be able to manage the business; suppose you let him take my saber, and I'll go," suggested Briggs.

"You look like it, now don't you? Pretty healthy specimen you'd be to send on a ride like that."

"It wouldn't hurt me and it might do me good. I ask it as a favor, major."

"Well, I won't. Howland's going." He rang the bell for his orderly and sent that unduly erect individual to find Lieut. Howland, give him the commanding officer's compliments, and say he would like to see him in the adjutant's office immediately.

When the orderly had gone on his way, Briggs tilted back in his chair, with its burnt ornament of Q. M. D., and fingered his saber knot, and watched the flies circling with a faint buzz in the center of the room. The adjutant turned his attention to a legal-cap document much underscored and lined in red ink, and glanced uneasily at the door. The official paper did not claim his attention long. "He can start now and be back by noon to-morrow."

"Yes," said Briggs, "he can."

"I suppose he'll see the reason for it."

"I suppose so," assented Briggs. "He's a sensible fellow."

"Yes, he's sensible," Briggs agreed. "The major felt that his junior officer was not exactly encouraging. 'What the deuce would you have me do then?'" he chafed.

"Let us go."

"You're as pig-headed as a donkey!" muttered the major. "You shan't go, I tell you."

"All right, but I'd rather not be around when you send Howland, that's

all. It's a rude interruption of love's young dream. You've my sympathy, as you've got the talking to do. Here he comes. Shall I help you out, or may I go?" asked the brave soldier, rising and looking longingly toward the door.

"Go, go by all means, and leave me the nasty job."

Briggs resumed his seat, his saber clanked and he knocked down an Army Register for '70. While he was picking it up Howland came in. He was the most promising officer in the regiment, and was tall, and strong, and homely. He had a square jaw and a straight mouth, and the jaw looked squarer and the mouth straighter just now. He wore something unpleasant when he caught sight of Briggs and the major. Briggs was small and thin, the major was short and fat, and both were unusually impressed with Howland's stature.

"E-e-eh," commenced the commanding officer, and dog-eared the legal-cap document and straightened it out again. "En, Howland?"

"Well, sir?"

"Why—eh, I've got to ask you a deuced unpleasant thing, Howland."

"I will try to answer it, major."

"Not a question, not a question. It's something I've got to ask you to do, and, by Jove, I'd rather be shot."

"Anything I can do for you I shall be most happy to do."

"See here. Everybody is sick or away, and I'm so old and fat, and Briggs is just out of a fever and hardly able to stand, you know, and some one has got to go up to the agency and quiet a fuss among the bucks about the beef issue. Whoever goes has got to go now and get there in a hurry. I suppose I might attempt it, I suppose I might; but I'd make a mess of the business. I can't manage those bucks. I lose my temper too fast—and then I'm so fat," said the major, sadly. "Briggs insists upon going, but you see he shouldn't; I won't allow him to. Don't you see how it is? There's only you available."

"Certainly, sir."

"I've got to ask you to do it to prevent a lot of trouble. I know you are going to be married to-morrow, and it's the most disagreeable thing I ever had to do, to send you away to-day. But you see how it is?" he reiterated.

"Of course, I see; and I'll go—not exactly with pleasure—but still, I'll go. I can get back by noon to-morrow—and that'll give me time to shave and dress," he added, with a grim smile.

They discussed the matter at some length, and Howland went to get on his scouting clothes for the long, hot ride through dust as drying and choking as flour, and to say good-by to Capt. Trowbridge's youngest daughter.

Like the princess of fairy lore, she was as good as she was beautiful, and had light hair and brown eyes, and dimples, and clinging, feminine ways. Howland was badly in love; had been for several years, but many things had happened to prevent his marriage. At first he had had a mother and sister to support on a second lieutenant's pay; then his sister had married and his mother had died, so his fortune was all his own; but at that time Doris Trowbridge was engaged to marry another man.

When she found that she cared more for Howland than for her fiancé she broke the engagement, and was meek, and tearful, and ashamed of herself for a month, until she and Howland arranged things satisfactorily between them. They were to have been married six months before, but Howland was ordered off on a scout; and three months after that she had been at the point of death; so now, though the season was unpropitious, they had determined to take time by the forelock, make the most of the chance visit of a clergyman and be married in the middle of July.

At this juncture Howland was being sent away, and he grew desperate.

Nevertheless, he said good-by to little Miss Trowbridge with exemplary calmness, and was more careful than she not to show depression.

"You'll come back, surely, won't you?" she begged.

"Of course I will, goosey. Don't I go to the agency on an average of twice a month nearly all the time?"

"I know. But some way this seems different."

Howland agreed with her, but he laughed at her for all that.

"It's like the legend of Sir Olof, isn't it? He went away the night before he was to be married, and an erl maiden made him die."

"There's nothing so fascinating as an erl maiden at the agency, more's the pity," he told her.

Then he went and rode off under the scorching sun in a cloud of dust, two soldiers behind him and all well mounted.

The girl watched him until she could see him no longer, and went back into the tent to sit with a white face and closed lips and dry eyes, looking at the sands of the parade-ground.

Howland held a long council with the chiefs, and very nearly succeeded in settling the difficulties before nightfall. They talked, sitting under a shelter of willow sticks and branches. There was a half-sured ox-hide on the ground upon which they squatted.

Two of the Indians played monte with a pack of grotesque rawhide cards, and one whittled a stick for an arrow shaft. They liked Howland, and they trusted him. This was known, so missions of the sort usually fell to him. He talked now and waxed very eloquent, and the chiefs grunted as the interpreter translated. They were almost won to him, but they postponed their decision until they should have time to talk matters over, so they bade him return after dark. Howland went away, after having given the daughter of one of the bucks a bright handkerchief and having said a few words to her out of his scanty vocabulary. The girl looked at him intently, with her little, bird-like eyes twinkling, and said nothing in reply, but smoothed the bandanna on her knees. When he was gone, she rose and stood

in front of her tepee to watch him out of sight, as the fair-haired white woman had done a few hours before.

After a time she put the handkerchief on her head and went in the direction he had taken.

When she found him it was dusk and the coyotes had begun to whine and bark all about them, and one faint star glimmered in the purpling sky. Her eyes were wonderfully bright, and her wild gracefulness would have been alluring to another man.

She went up behind him and touched him on the shoulder. He faced about and asked what she wanted. But for the bright handkerchief on her head, he would not have remembered her. When he saw that, he smiled, and the girl, encouraged, began a protestation of desperate, savage love in the most even of voices and broken of English, interspersed with Apache and Mexican.

Howland answered her kindly, and, to her calm-toned pleadings, smiled in her tense face and turned away.

"Poco tiempo, you come," she said, gliding after him and grasping his hand. She followed him for a few yards, still holding his hand. "You come?" she insisted.

"Yes, poco tiempo, I come see your father."

She flung the hand from her and hurried off into the shadow, with a low snarl.

Late at night, as Howland left the council of the braves, a hundred yards from the camp a woman strode up to him, and, without any preface, dropped at his feet and caught his hands, and repeated the story of her savage passion in the same monotone, as tinkling and musical as the sound of a crystal bell.

But Howland had completed his embassy successfully, and was in haste to return to the camp during the night and comparative coolness, so he pushed her away with a disgusted "Vamoose!" and hurried on.

Years ago there were still poisoned arrows used occasionally, weapons deadlier than the popular rifle or carbine, for their scratch was fatal. The head was dipped in a poison curiously made. A bit of liver, quite putrid, was held before a rattlesnake until he had injected his venom into it time and time again. After a few more days this virulent substance was put upon the points of the arrows, to carry agony and dissolution to whatsoever they touched.

It was one of these arrows that Howland jerked from his arm, a few moments later, as he went into the hut where his two soldiers were waiting.

He held it in front of the candle and examined it intently, while the blood dripped over his dusty boot. One of the men asked him how it had happened, while he cut open the sleeve.

"A mistake, very likely. It was not one of the bucks; we parted good friends." The woman he did not mention. He looked at the arrow again. "It's poisoned, I guess. Rather hard luck," he said. He passed one hand across his face wearily, and repeated: "Hard luck!" Then he gave the men a detailed account of what he had done and accomplished, that they might tell the major in case he himself should be past speaking. The agency doctor was off on a two-days' hunting trip, so the soldiers bathed and dressed the wound and made Howland drink the contents of a large flask of whiskey. But he ordered his horse and went back to the post, nevertheless, across the long, gleaming plain of sand, under the purple arch with its stars of glimmering gold; three weird, dark figures following the road through the night.

And just as the gray dawn came over the far-off black mountains, just as the dawn breeze sprang up and blew on his swollen and burning face, just as the first call for reveille shrilled through the valley, two dust-whitened riders, supporting him in his saddle, drew up at the hospital.

At two o'clock a stretcher carried the body of Lieut. Howland from the hospital to his quarters; and the flag was put at half-mast.—San Francisco Argonaut.

He Couldn't Coon It.

One of the grand officers of the Native Sons was visiting a parlor of the order in Butler county recently. At roll call he observed that quite a number had been absent from the last meeting.

When the time for making constitutional excuses came the president said: "Worthy vice president,"—the officer stood up—"you were absent from the last meeting. What legal excuse have you to offer therefor?"

"I couldn't coon it," he replied, and sat down again.

"Your excuse is accepted."

The visiting official puzzled over the excuse for an hour. He could not understand the reply. Finally, at recess, he went to the vice president to interpret his excuse.

"Well," he said, "there is quite a large stream between my residence and the town, and there are no bridges across it—nothing but a barbed wire fence. The coons creep across the creek on this wire, and at the time of the last meeting the water in the creek was so high that I couldn't wade it, neither could I coon the barbed wire."—San Francisco Post.

—It is not generally known that the word "dollar" appears in Shakespeare's works, being used in Measure for Measure, written in 1603, in act 1, scene 2, "To \$3,000 a year;" in Macbeth, written in 1606, act 1, scene 2, where burial is refused to Sweno's men until "Ten thousand dollars to our general use" have been paid.

—Our nickel coins are really misnamed, and should be styled copper coins. The three-cent nickel contains 75 per cent. of copper and only 25 per cent. of nickel. The ordinary five-cent nickel in common use has the same proportions of copper and nickel, three-fourths of the former and one-fourth of the latter.

Most Appropriate.

"Entuz," said old Mr. Tibbetts, sternly, "who was that young man I found kissing you at the door last night?"

"It was Mr.—Mr. Lippincott," stammered Emily in a faint voice.

Old Mr. Tibbetts glared at his daughter fixedly for a moment, and then a softer light shone in his eye. In both eyes, in fact.

"B'george!" he cried, slapping his knee, "he's well named, too!"—N. Y. World.

A Stayer.

"You remind me so strongly of a lady's watch," Miss De Smith concluded when young Mr. Featherly had forgotten for ever and ever so long how late it had got to be.

"Because—" he hesitatingly began.

"It never is going," explained Miss De Smith, in clear, incisive accents. But that would him up again.—N. Y. Recorder.

IT WAS THE SPELLING.



The Man—There! Guess that sign'll keep the loafers off.

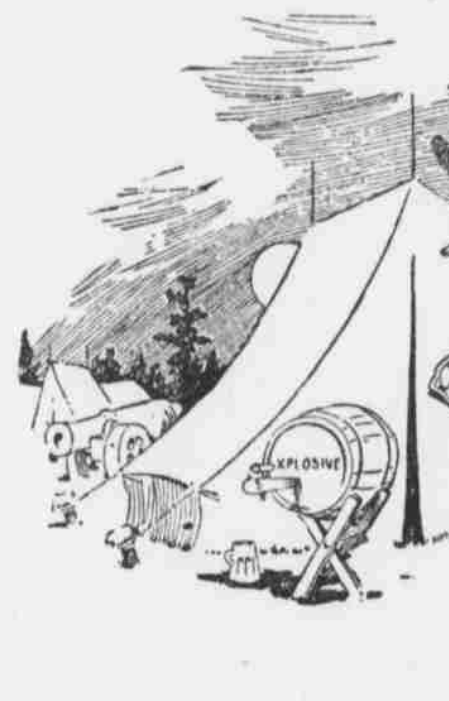
The Hen—Well, it would be a crazy sort of a hen that would try that.—Up-to-Date.

Make a Successful Doctor.

Dr. Emdee—Don't be discouraged; your son will be a successful physician before you know it.

Graduate's Father—What indications of this have you observed?

Dr. Emdee—He has just the face for hot-house whiskers.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.



THE DARKTOWN REGIMENT IN CAMP.

Sergeant—Put out dat light!

Voice Within—Dat's de moon, sahgent.

Sergeant—Don't keer what it am; put hit out.

Used to It.

"I hope our conversation did not annoy you?" said a gentleman to a friend, who sat behind a talkative party at the opera.

"Oh, no, not at all," replied the man addressed; "my office, you know, is next door to a boiler shop."—Yonkers Statesman.

The Difference.

May—How quickly you learned to wheel! It took me the whole winter to learn.

Minnie—Oh, how deliciously jolly! You must have had a perfect love of a professor to have been all that time at it.—Town Topics.

Just Satisfied for It.

Mr. Muchblest—I don't think we can do better than put Johnny in the dry goods business.

Mr. Muchblest—Why so?

Mr. Muchblest—His teacher says he is always getting marked down.—N. Y. World.

Unmitigated Selfishness.

"Ruggles, how does it feel to have a tooth pulled?"

"It cost me a dollar to find out. If you want to know how it feels go and pay for the knowledge, like a man."—Chicago Tribune.

In Confidence.

Friend—Who spread the report that you were financially embarrassed?

Millionaire—I did, and it has worked like a charm! Lord Ninkumpus has hardly noticed my daughter since.—Town Topics.

Kind Offer.

Highwayman—Your money or your life.

Poet—Money I have none, but if you will tell me of some of your adventures I will write them down and divide the profits with you.—Fliegende Blätter.

Making His Mark.

She—Have you heard that our minister is to be tried for heresy?

He—Yes. It is quite a distinction for so young a man.—Brooklyn Life.

Unreasonable.

Edna—I prefer people to say just what they think of me.

Edith—You could hardly expect so much candor as that.—Up-to-Date.

What He Knew About It.

"Have you seen Mathilde's new dress?" asked Mrs. Cumrox.

"No, I haven't seen Mathilde's new dress," was the not very genial reply; "and what is more, I don't want to see it."

"I should think you would have enough of the sentiments of a father about you to take an interest in what Mathilde wears."

"I can find out all I want to know about Mathilde's dresses," he rejoined, persisting in his own pronunciation, "without seeing them."

"Oh, indeed. Then perhaps you can describe the material of this one."

"I can; not minutely, but none the less accurately. The most conspicuous thing about the material is a large check. I feel sure about that, because I wrote the check myself."—Washington Star.

Evidence of Luck.

"Lucky? Well, I should say he was. He's one of the luckiest men that ever was born."

"What makes you think so?"

"Think so! I don't think so; I know it. Why, sir, that man actually put down an umbrella in a public hallway on a rainy day and thoughtlessly left it there 15 minutes without losing it."—Chicago Post.

Misplaced Sympathy.

Mr. Textly—My dear old friend, I am shocked and grieved to notice that the destroying angel has visited your home.

Old Bonder—What do you mean?

Mr. Textly—I was alluding to that band of craps which you are wearing.

Old Bonder (looking at his hat)—Jee-willikins! I must have traded hats with that fellow in the barber shop.—Bay City Chat.

Could Not Wait.

The Old Man (tearfully)—And you want to take my only daughter from me in my old age! Can you not wait?

The Suitor—Well, no, not exactly. I don't mind taking her in your old age, but I don't care about taking her in hers.—N. Y. World.

Knowledge Lends Power.

Kate—Has Charlie acquired any accomplishments since he went to college?

Flossie—I should say he had. You ought to see how easily he keeps a cigarette in his mouth when he's talking.—Tit-Bits.

How the Electors Fill the Two Highest Offices in the Land.

The aggregate number of electors this year will be 447, of which a majority is 224. These are divided as follows: Alabama, 11; Arkansas, 8; California, 9; Colorado, 4; Connecticut, 6; Delaware, 3; Florida, 4; Georgia, 13; Idaho, 3; Illinois, 24; Indiana, 13; Iowa, 13; Kansas, 10; Kentucky, 13; Louisiana, 8; Maine, 6; Maryland, 8; Massachusetts, 15; Michigan, 21; Minnesota, 9; Mississippi, 9; Missouri, 17; Montana, 3; Nebraska, 8; Nevada, 3; New Hampshire, 4; New Jersey, 10; New York, 36; North Carolina, 11; North Dakota, 3; Ohio, 23; Oregon, 4; Pennsylvania, 22; Rhode Island, 4; South Carolina, 9; South Dakota, 4; Tennessee, 12; Texas, 15; Utah, 3; Vermont, 4; Virginia, 12; Washington, 4; West Virginia, 6; Wisconsin, 12, and Wyoming, 3. The territories and the District of Columbia, which have representation in the nominating conventions of both parties, have no voice in the electoral college. The electors of each state meet at the capital of the state "on the first Wednesday in December in the year in which they are appointed" and cast the vote of the state for the candidate of the party by which they were elected. In case no candidate receives a majority of all the electors the house of representatives shall elect, the vote being taken by states, each state casting one vote.

When the electors meet in their respective states and cast their ballots for president and vice president, "they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as president and of all persons voted for as vice president, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the president of the senate." On the second Wednesday in February succeeding the meeting of the electors in the several states congress shall, in joint session in the hall of representatives, the president of the senate presiding, open the certificates, count the votes and declare the result, if either candidate shall have a majority. In the event that neither candidate has been elected the house of representatives elects the president, being limited to the three candidates having received the highest vote of electors, and the senate elects the vice president, a majority of the whole number being necessary to a choice.—Chicago Times-Herald.

No Love in Handel.

In Handel's life alone the tender passion appears to have had no place. He has been accused, and that on no substantial authority, of but one affair de cour, and, if the story be authentic, it would seem that most of the seatment and all the suffering were on the lady's side. Even as a youth he had made up his mind to have no mistress but music, for it is recorded of him that, having journeyed to Lubeck to compete for the post of public organist, he unhesitatingly refused to enter the lists as soon as he learned that the successful competitor was expected to take the retiring organist's daughter to wife. Doubtless it was at least as fortunate for Fraulein Buxtehude as for himself that he declined a rivalry in which he was likely to succeed.—Blackwood's Magazine.

Railroading in Germany.

Germany has made some bold experiments at railroad speed on the line between Berlin and Grolitz. The best performance was 65 1/2 miles, which was 13 miles better than the highest speed of the fastest German train, the Berlin-Hamburg lightning express, which does 177 1/2 miles in 3 1/2 hours. Ordinary German express trains make 43 1/2 miles an hour.—N. Y. Sun.

China last year consumed 93,400 pounds of American meats and dairy products, valued at \$12,923.

Various Methods.

How strangely do life's prizes go, Awarded by the crowd; Some triumph by the things they know, And some by talking loud.

—Washington Star.